



STAR-MAN



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FEB 95

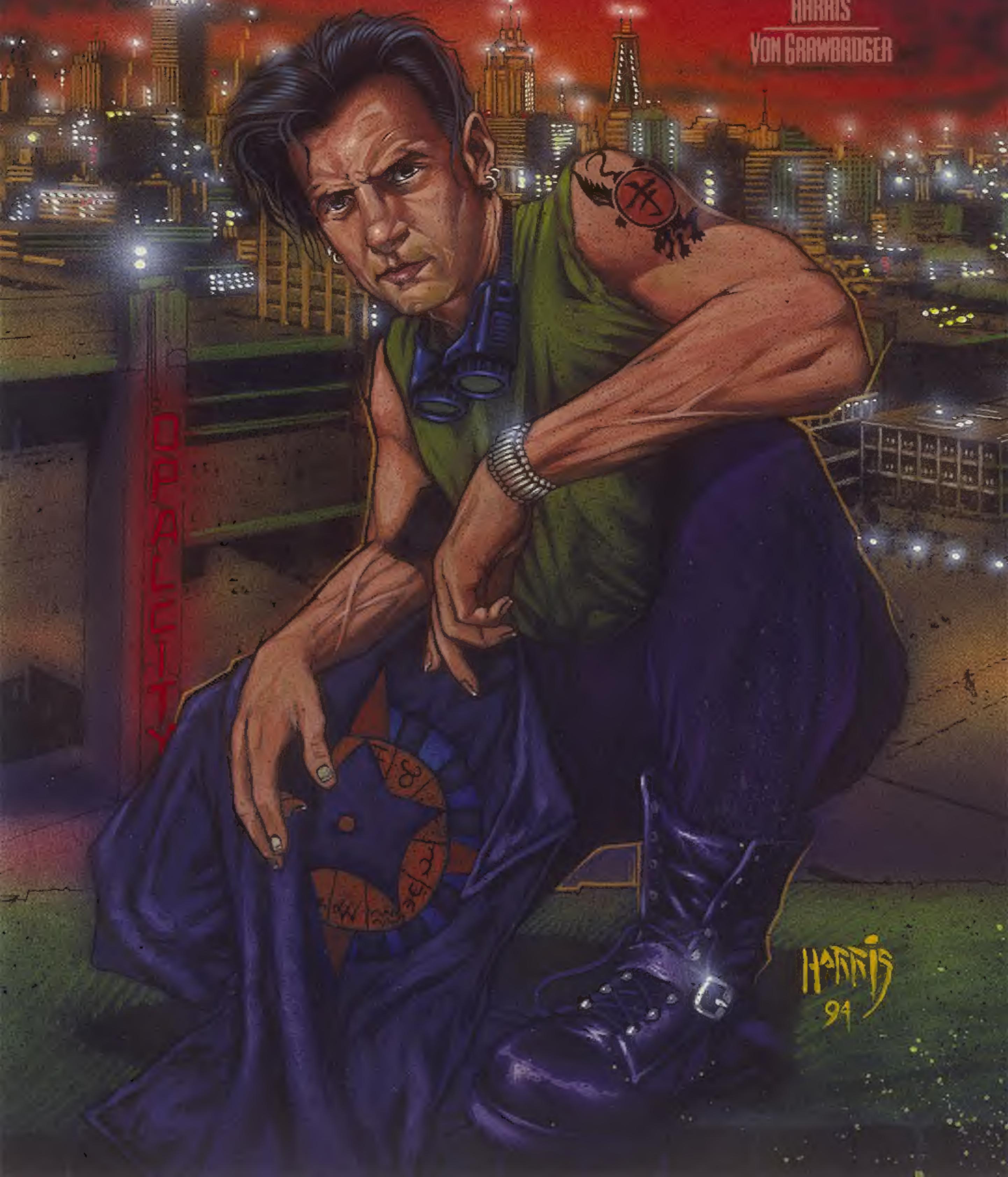
\$1.95 US
\$2.75 CAN
£1.25 UK

ROBINSON

HARRIS

YON GRAWBARGER

STAR-MAN



PROLOGUE

HE APPEARED ON THE BEACH ONE MORNING, RANTING AND SCREAMING AND SINGING SHOW TUNES. THE HAWAIIAN WINDS WERE GENTLE THAT DAY, SO HIS VOICE CARRIED FAR AND DREW MUCH ATTENTION.

HE CLAIMED HE WAS TRAINED IN MYSTICISM, A STRAIN OF ARCAN STUDY PERFECTED SOUTH, SOUTH, SOUTH AMONG THE MOUNTAIN DWELLERS OF THE ANDES.

HE CLAIMED TO BE AN ARTIST. A SIGN PAINTER. A SCULPTOR.

SOME DOUBTED THIS, SO HE DREW A QUICK RENDERING OF MADONNA AND CHILD IN THE SAND. SO FINE WAS THE ARTWORK THAT, AS THE TIDE ROLLED IN TO CLAIM IT, PEOPLE CRIED AT THE LOSS.

THE MAN HAD HUMOR AND TERRIBLE HYGIENE. THE MAN WAS WILD AND THOUGHTFUL AND QUICK. AND THE PEOPLE OF THIS AREA TOOK HIM IN AS ONE OF THEIR OWN.

WORK CAME TO THIS MAN BY CHANCE. THERE WAS DEMAND FOR HIS ARTWORK, BUT IN A FORM EVEN HE IN HIS CRAZIEST OF CRAZED TIMES HADN'T ENVISIONED--



FOR THESE WERE A PEOPLE WHO ACCEPTED. THEY ACCEPTED EACH OTHER AND ANY NEW-COMER WHO ADDED TO THE MIX AND WHOSE COMPANY WAS ENJOYABLE.



HAWAIIAN SHIRTS.



THE LOUD, CRAZY MAN WAS HARRY AJAX. IT WAS 1931. AND FOR A FEW STERLING YEARS, HIS WORK WAS RENOWNED.



IN 1933, HARRY ANNOUNCED, OVER A DINNER OF PORK AND PINEAPPLE, THAT HE INTENDED TO BEGIN HIS GREATEST, FINEST SHIRT DESIGN. HE RAMBLED A BIT, SO NO ONE TOOK HIM TOO SERIOUSLY AS HE DECLARED HIS AIM--

--TO COMBINE HIS MYSTIC ABILITIES WITH THE DESIGN OF HIS SHIRTS... AND PAINT THE GATEWAY TO HEAVEN ON THE BACK OF ONE OF THEM.

THE PEOPLE LISTENED AND LAUGHED AND CONTINUED TO EAT. THEY THOUGHT THIS WAS MERELY "HARRY BEING HARRY." THEY SOON FORGOT.

HARRY BEGAN HIS MASTERWORK THE FOLLOWING AFTERNOON.

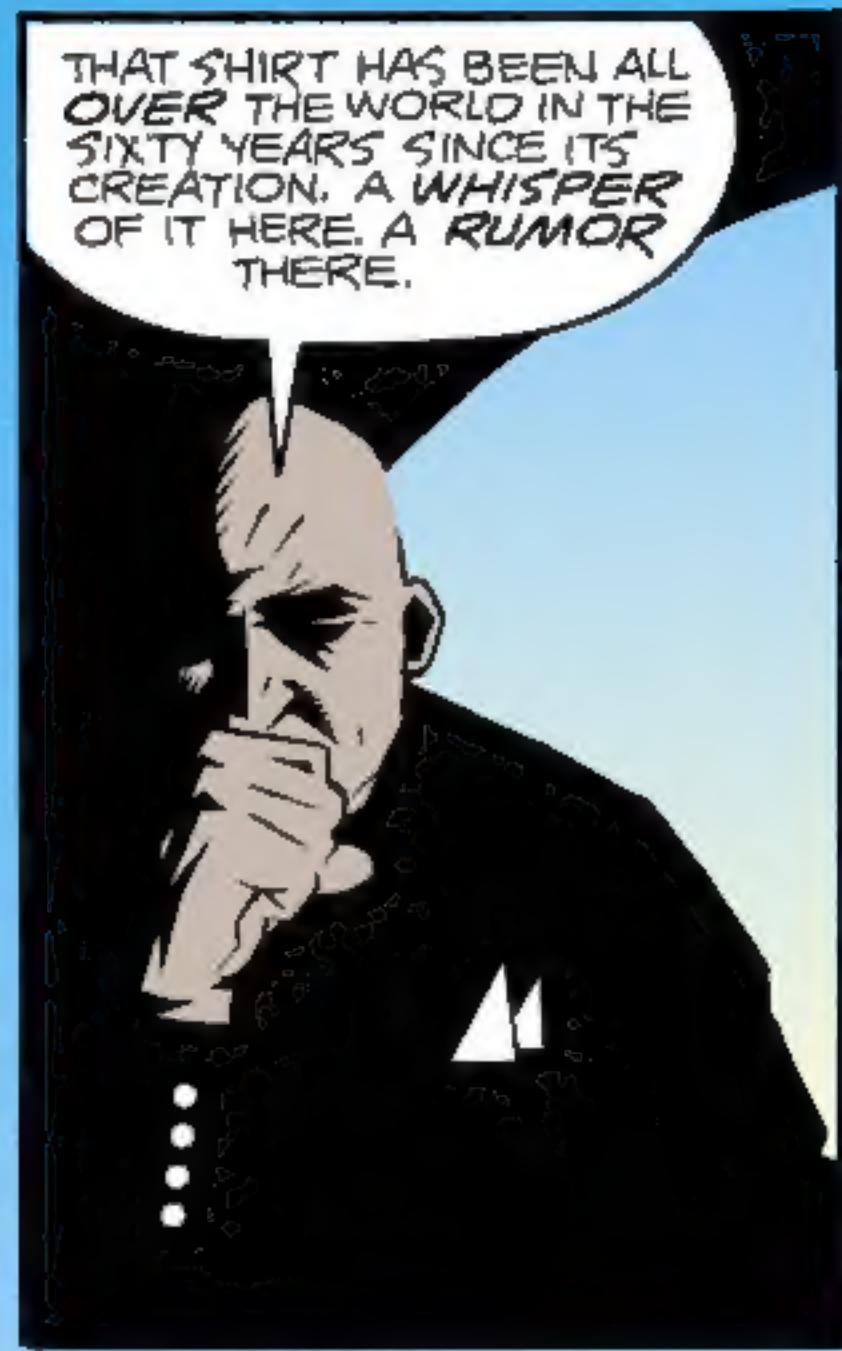
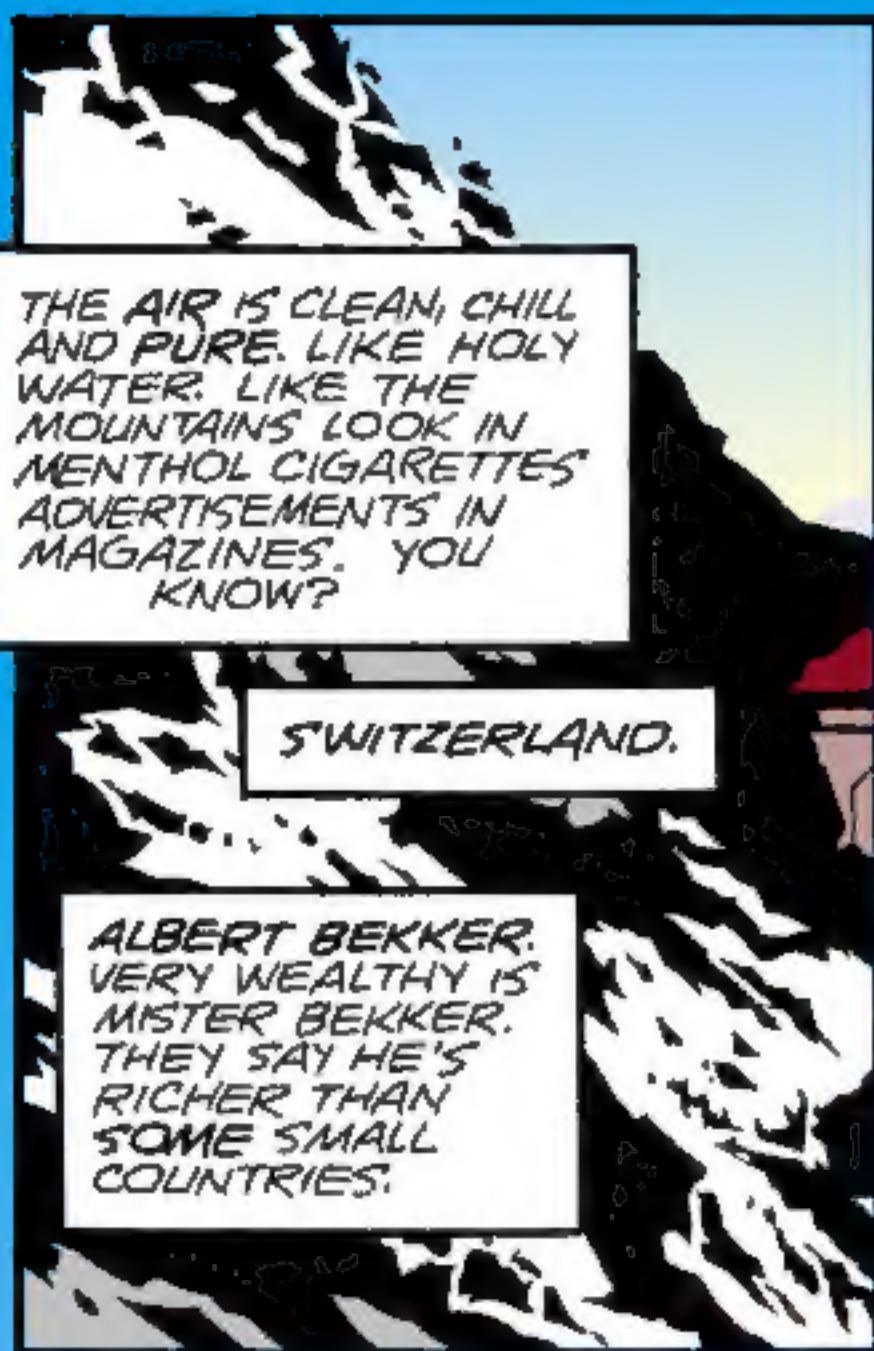
BY NINE O'CLOCK THAT EVENING, IT WAS FINISHED.

THE LOUD, QUIET MAN WAS GONE FOREVER.



AND HARRY AJAX WAS NEVER SEEN AGAIN. THAT NIGHT, AT SOME POINT BETWEEN NINE O'CLOCK AND MORNING, HE VANISHED FROM THIS EARTHLY PLANE.





"...OPAL CITY."

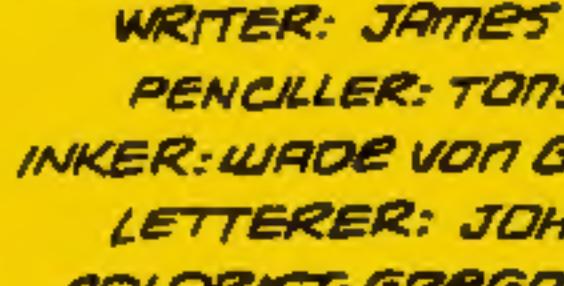
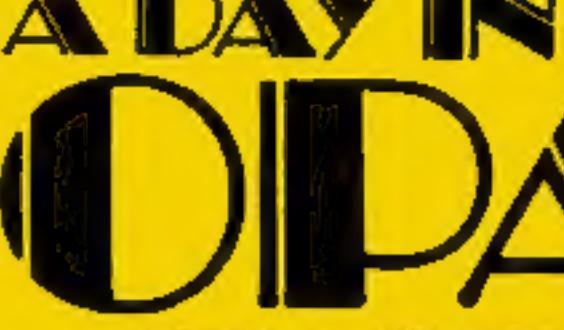


PEZ
YOU GOT, HUH?
CREATURE? FRANKIE?
WOLFMAN?

NO? THEN
WHAT ABOUT ZORRO?
THE HUMANS? THE
SPECTRES? THE PSYCHE-
DELICS? I COULD
USE ANY OF
THOSE.

WHAT?
YOU GOT TURTLES?
I CAN GO INTO A
CONVENIENCE STORE
AND GET TURTLES. WHY
ARE YOU WASTING MY
TIME WITH THIS, SAMMY?
I TOLD YOU I NEED
GOOD STOCK FOR
MY STORE. THE ANY-
DAY AND EVERYDAY
I CAN GLOM FOR
MYSELF.

NO, I'M NOT
MAD. I'M JUST
EAGER TO GET
MY LIFE BACK.
YEAH, YEAH, I'LL
SPEAK TO YOU.
CALL ME.



A DAY IN THE DIPAIL

WRITER: JAMES ROBINSON

PENCILLER: TONY HARRIS

INKER: WADE VON GRAWBADGER

LETTERER: JOHN WORKMAN

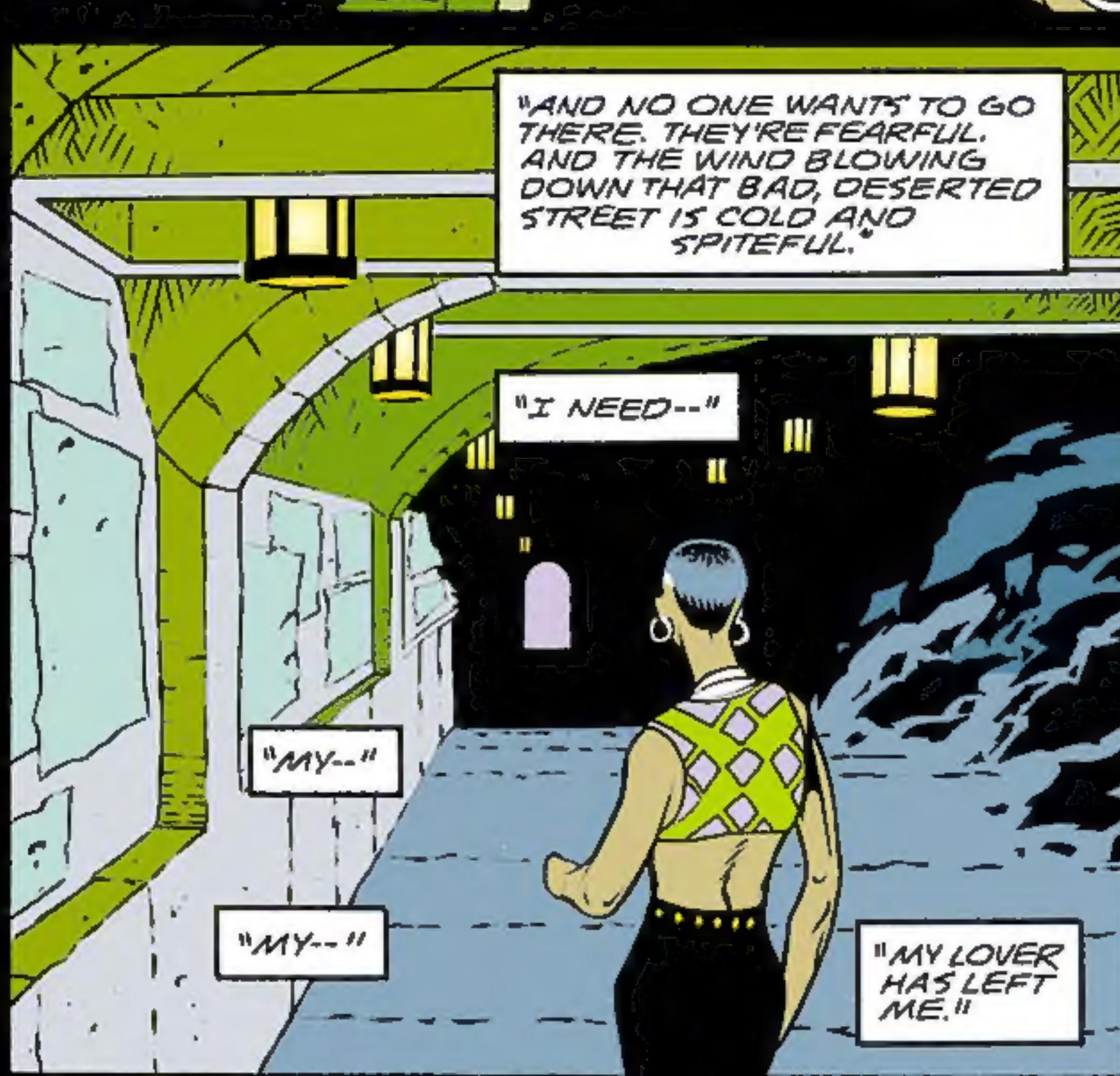
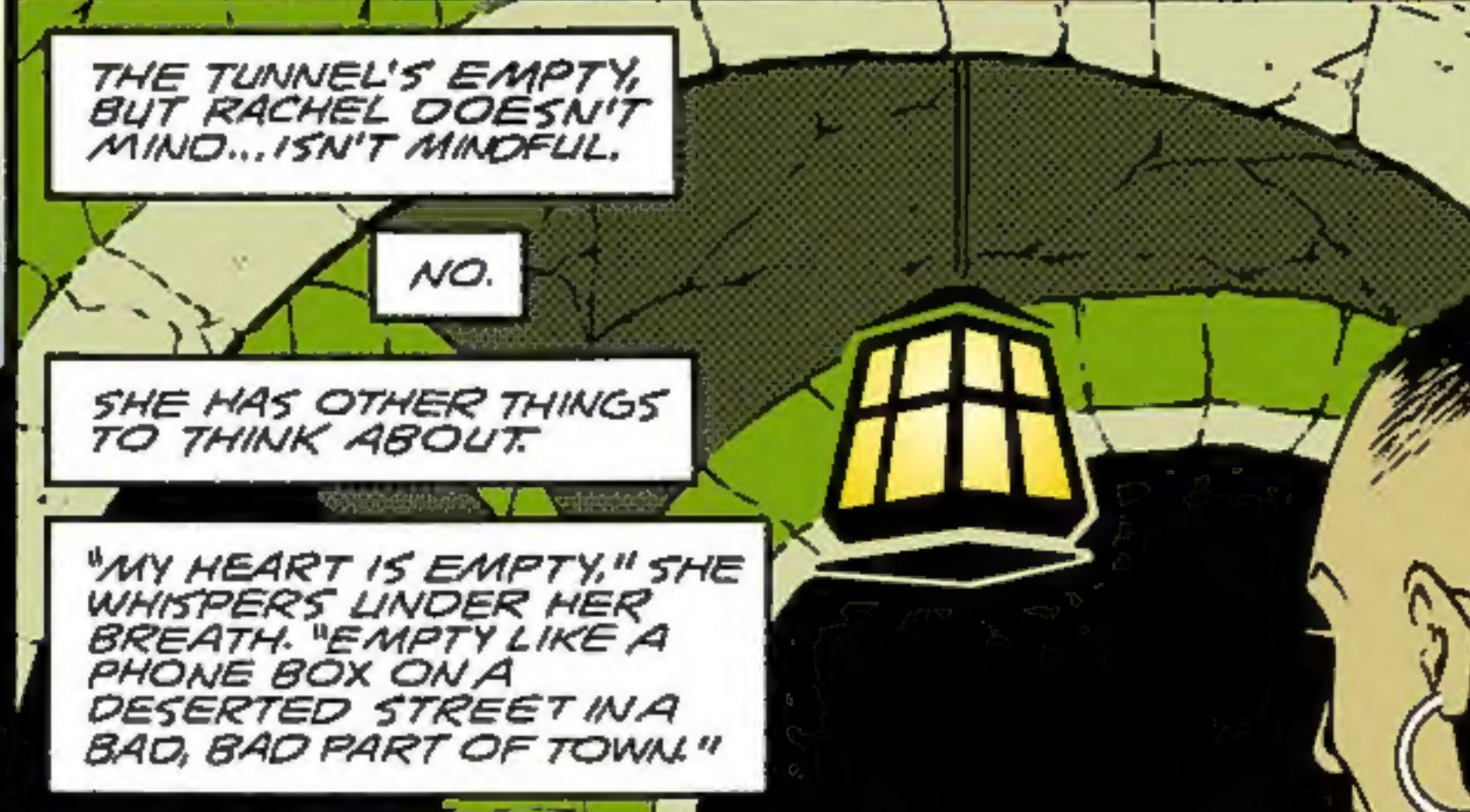
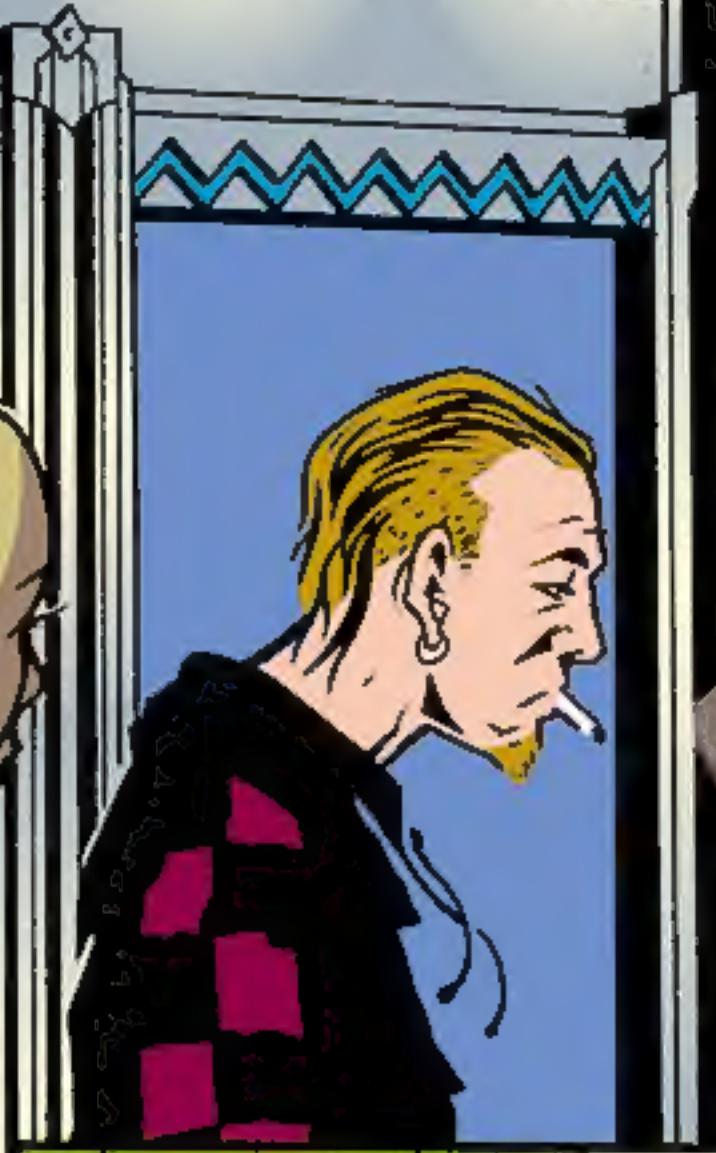
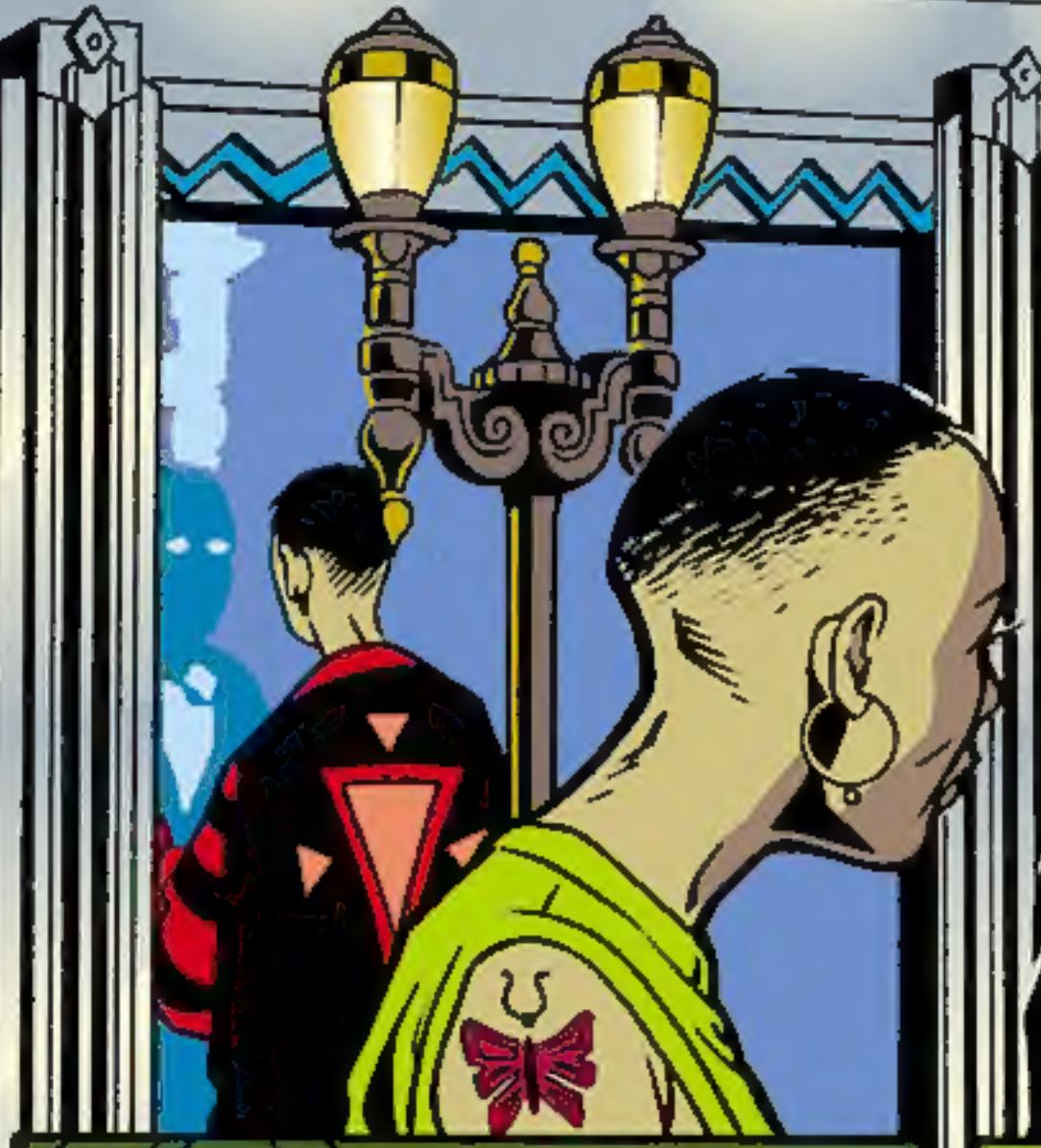
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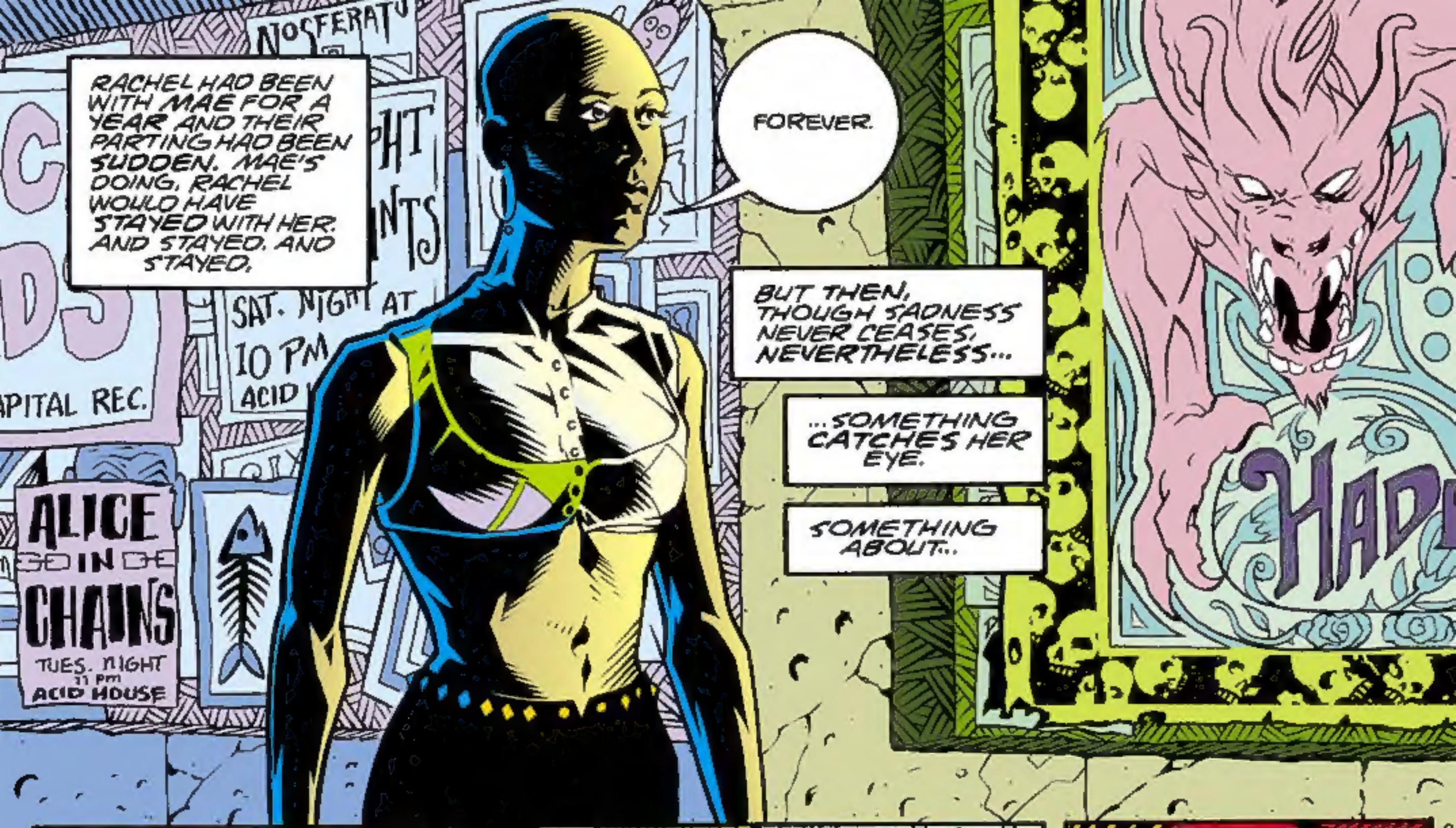
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THE TUNNELS LINK THE "OLD" OF THE ALLEYS WITH THE STREAMLINED "NEW" OF THE OPAL CITY SURROUNDING IT.

IF THE ALLEYS ARE THE CITY'S ANCIENT HEART, THEN THESE TUNNELS ARE ITS VEINS. LINKING... BRINGING LIFE.







THE OPAL

THE SOUNDS
OF THE OPAL.

LIKE NOWHERE ELSE,
YOU LISTEN, YOU HEAR,
THERE'S MUSIC IN EVERY
FOOTSTEP AND WINDOW
SLAMMING SHUT AND
TAXI BREAKING FAST TO
TURN A SHARP CORNER AND
SEWER/SUBWAY
GURGLE.

SOMEBODY'S PLAYING A
A SNARE DRUM, SYNCOPATED,
OF COURSE, AND
THE DRUMMER'S VERY
GOOD, EVEN IF IT'S
REALLY A BUS ENGINE
AT A RED LIGHT.

IN THE ALLEYS, THERE'S AN
ARGUMENT BETWEEN TWO
LOVERS. A SKA TAPE PLAYING
IN SOMEONE'S CAR
TURNS THE WHOLE THING
INTO OPERA.

A SOFT TINKLING
NOISE FAR OFF
AND AWAY, LIKE
A FEATHER
STROKING A
XYLOPHONE. IT'S
THE CINEMA
LUNA'S FLICKER-
ING NEON.

LIBRA AVENUE, WHERE
THE LAWYERS HAVE
THEIR SEDATE OFFICES,
ALWAYS SEEMING TEN
DEGREES COOLER
THAN ANY OTHER PART
OF TOWN. WHERE A
BREEZE THROUGH THE
TREES IS SWEET AS
ANY HARP.

AND THERE'S THE HORN SOLO TRAFFIC
JAM ON ZULU BOULEVARD. AND THERE'S
A BLANKET OF FINCHES THAT TAKE TO
THE SKY OVER THE CHOWDER DISTRICT.
THEIR SCREECH HAS A LILT IN THIS
CITY, NOWHERE ELSE BUT HERE.

AND THE TUBA-PLAYING TUGBOAT
IN SEVEN COLORS RIVER THAT
SERENADES ITS LOVER, THE
SHORELINE.

AND, OF COURSE, THERE'S
BURNLEY STREET, THE
BUSIEST STREET, THE
LIVELIEST, WHERE THE
SOUND OF PEOPLE AND
CARS AND SHOPS AND ALL...
AND EVERYTHING ELSE...
COMBINE, A CONCERTO
OF CANNON FIRE AND
BUTTERFLIES AND A
HUNDRED VIOLINS.

AND...

AND...

AND...

OR SO JACK
THINKS, FOR NO
ONE LOVES THIS
CITY MORE. OR
SO JACK
THINKS.

WHOA, YEAH. THIS
BAD BOY'LL SCARE
THE CRIMINALS...
OR... BRING A
SMILE TO THEIR
FACES, DEPENDING
ON HOW WEIRD
THEY ARE.

"IF THIS IS MY
DESTINY..."

...THEN I WANT
TO TAKE CON-
TROL OF THAT
DESTI-

A BREEZE,
SLIGHT THE
AIR... SOMETHING...

THIS IS SOME-
THING I FEEL I
HAD A HAND IN
CREATING. IF
I'M GOING TO
GET INTO THIS
HERO THING...



NEW ROD. NEW
DESIGN. LEAST
I GOT THAT
OUT OF DAD.



THIS IS SOME-
THING I FEEL I
HAD A HAND IN
CREATING. IF
I'M GOING TO
GET INTO THIS
HERO THING...



...THEN I WANT
TO TAKE CON-
TROL OF THAT
DESTI-

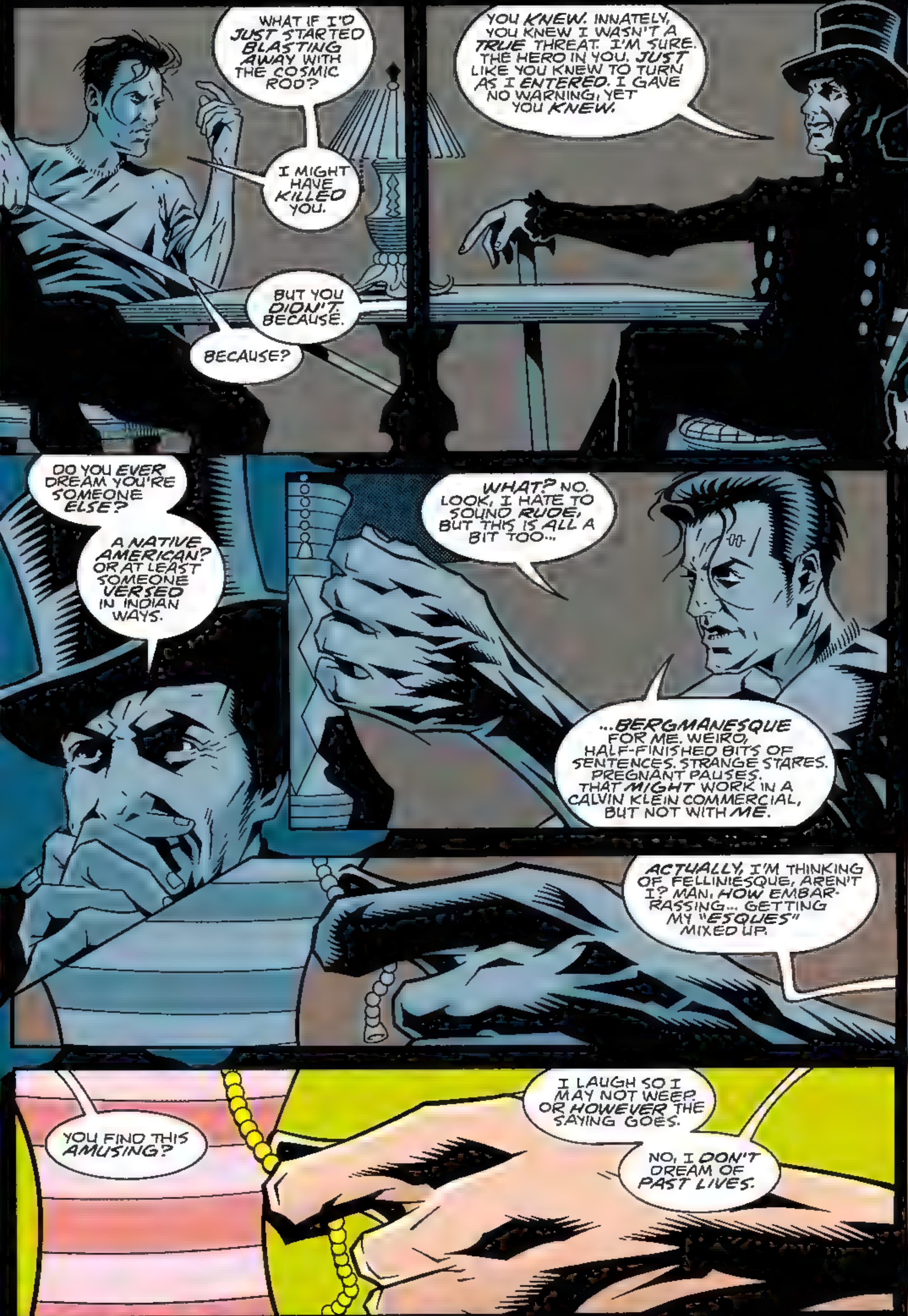


A BREEZE,
SLIGHT THE
AIR... SOMETHING...



...BEHIND
HIM!







THOUGH...
THINKING
'BOUT IT...

...ACTUALLY, I DO, BUT NOT A NATIVE AMERICAN. NO, I'M A NAPOLEONIC SPY. MY NAME'S ROSA IN THE DREAMS. FUNNY NAME FOR A GUY, I KNOW. BUT THERE YOU ARE. LOTS OF SWORDS AND SWASHBUCKLING.

I DON'T...
KNOW...
QUITE
WHERE
THIS IS
LEADING.

I WANT OPAL CITY TO
REMAIN THE... LANGUOR PLACE
IT WAS BEFORE THE MIST HAD
HIS RECENT FUN. I SEE IN YOU
SOMETHING... SPECIAL. SOMETHING EVEN
YOUR FATHER LACKS... A QUALITY
NEEDED TO GUARD THIS CITY.

THERE WAS A
LAWMAN IN THE
1900'S. HE PRO-
TECTED OPAL
CITY... THE SMALL
AREA THAT IT WAS
BACK THEN. HE
KEPT IT SAFE.
HE HAD
THAT SAME
QUALITY.

HE WAS A WHITE MAN RAISED
BY INDIANS. QUITE A LIFE HE
HAD. AND IN HIS TWILIGHT, HE
CAME TO THE OPAL... AND
EVERYONE HERE KNEW
SAFETY.

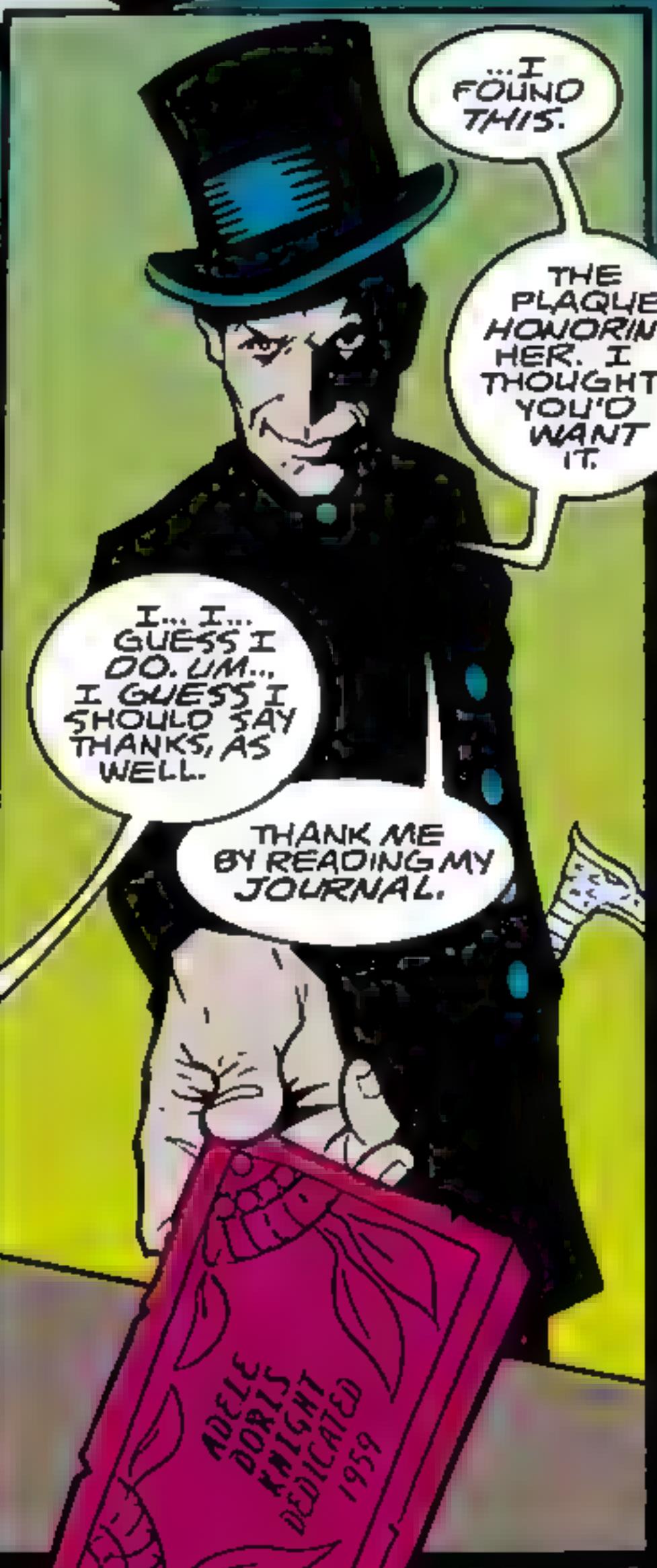
OH, SO YOU WERE
THINKING HE
AND I WERE--

A MUSING.
NOTHING
MORE.

BUT IF YOU ARE
GOING TO BE THE
OPAL'S CHAMPION,
I FEEL YOU SHOULD BE
FOREWARNED OF WHAT
THIS CITY IS. ITS
ROOTS. ITS PAST.

I'VE BEEN KEEPING
JOURNALS, MY PERSONAL
DOCUMENT OF THE OPAL.
I'D LIKE YOU TO READ A
VOLUME. WHEN YOU'RE
DONE, I'LL BRING
ANOTHER.

WHAT MAKES
YOU THINK I LIKE
TO READ? WHAT
MAKES YOU THINK
I EVEN CAN?



ALL RIGHT,
I WILL. I'M
HAPPY TO...
UH...

HEY!
THIS FIRST
ENTRY IS
FROM THE
1800'S.

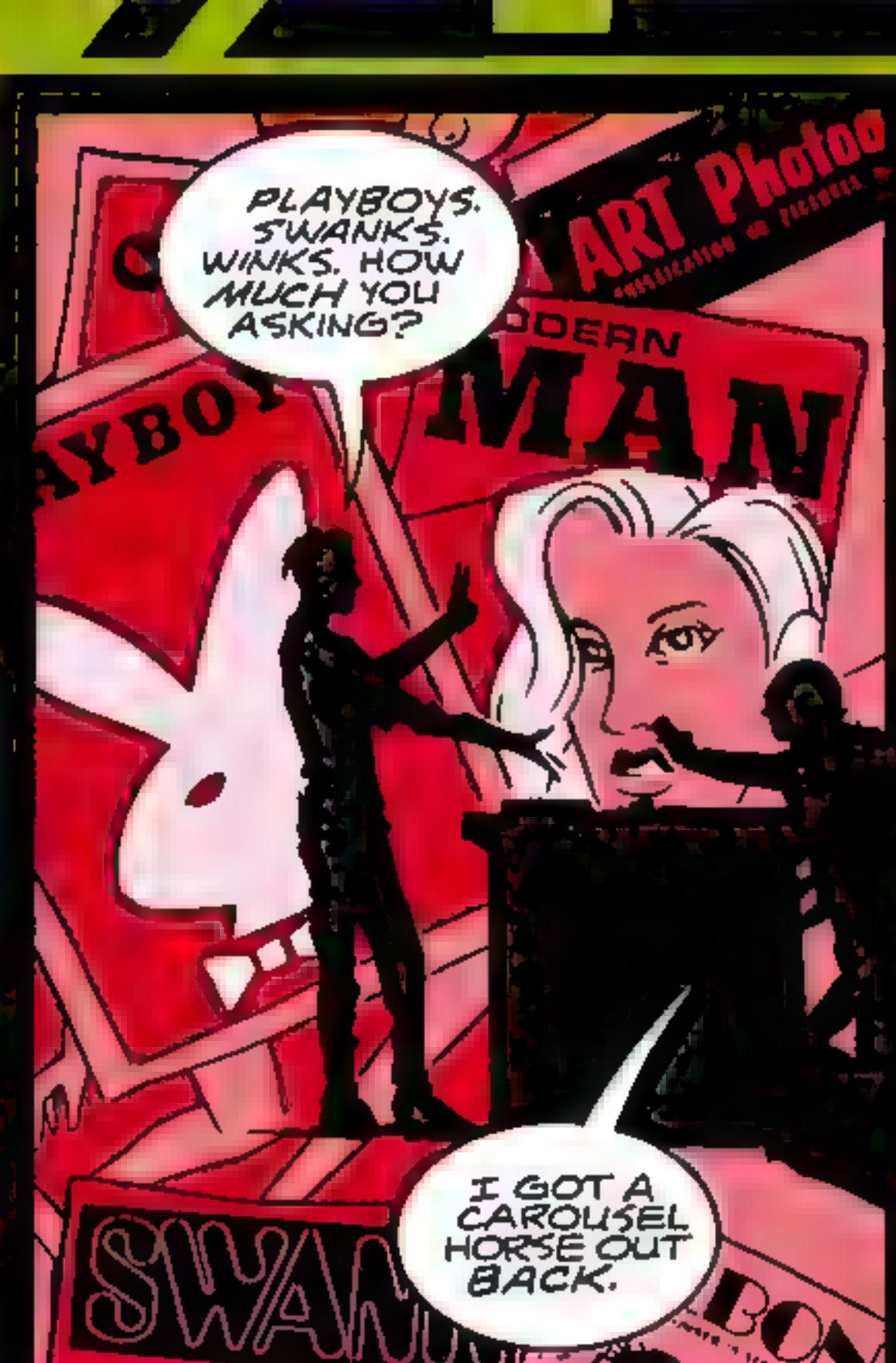
I'VE
BEEN
AROUND A
WHILE.

AS I HOPE
YOU WILL, TOO.
OPAL CITY'S
CHAMPION.
STARMAN.

REMEMBER,
JACK, YOU'RE THE
ONLY PERSON IN
THIS CITY UP TO
THE TASK.

I'M ALSO THE ONLY
PERSON IN THIS CITY WHO
PREFERS THE TWO JAKES
TO CHINATOWN. AND AS
FAR AS I CAN SEE,
THAT HAS ABOUT AS
MUCH BEARING
HERE.

WE'LL
SEE.
YOU'LL
SEE.





LOOK, IF YOU'RE SOME SUPER-POWERED NUT-CASE WHO'S GOING TO ATTACK ME, CAN YOU AT LEAST LET ME PUT THE KING DOWN FIRST?

OF COURSE. AND I DON'T INTEND... WANT TO ATTACK YOU. NO. NOT UNLESS I HAVE TO.

OH, YEAH, NOW WHAT?

HAVE TO? WHY, THEN? WHY FOR ART THOU?

YEAH, AND I BET HE'S QUITE THE BARGAIN HUNTER.

YOU HAVE SOMETHING MY EMPLOYER WANTS.

A HAWAIIAN SHIRT. A MAGICAL, MYSTICAL HAWAIIAN SHIRT.

LAST WEEK? YES, THAT WOULD BE THE RIGHT TIME, ACCORDING TO MY EMPLOYER'S INFORMATION. IN AMONG THEM IS THE SHIRT I SEEK

AND WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

THE PATTERN... THE PAINTING ON IT. IT'S A GATEWAY TO HEAVEN.

YOU... ARE... KIDDING.

I GOT A PILE OF SHIRTS IN LAST WEEK. STILL SORTING MY NEW STOCK OUT, THOUGH, AND HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO GET TO THEM YET.

I KNOW, I KNOW.
I HAD A HARD TIME
KEEPING A
STRAIGHT
FACE WHEN
MY BOSS
TOLD ME.
BUT THERE
YOU ARE.

WELL,
WHAT?
WHAT NOW?
YOU'VE GOT
THE GUN.
AND I'VE--

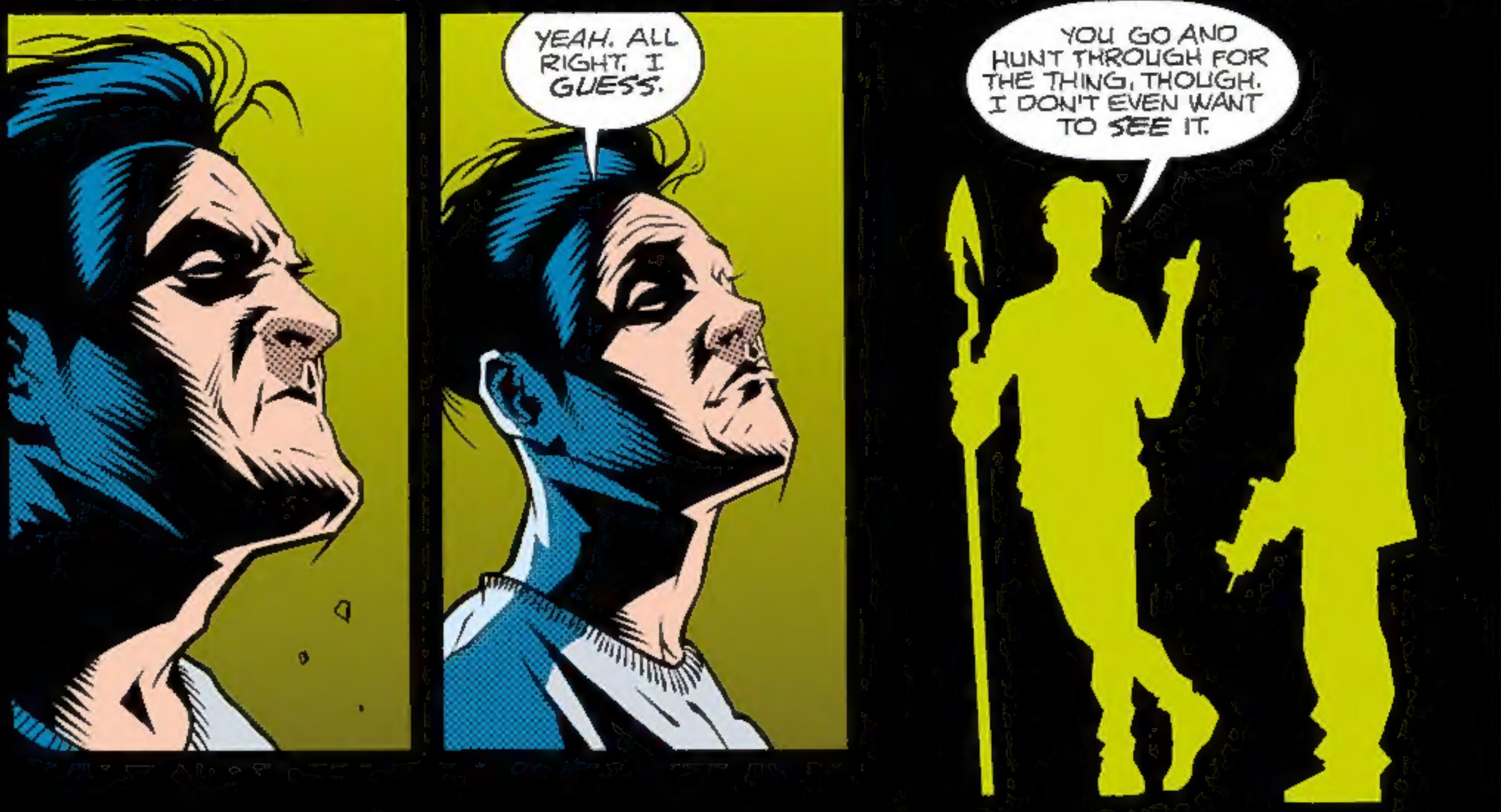
...GOT
MY... MEANS
OF DEFENSE,
TOO.

I DON'T WANT
TO, MAN, I AM STILL
SO WEARY AND MESSED
UP FROM A FIGHT I
HAD IN THE CLOUDS
RECENTLY.

I'M NOT
LETTING YOU ROB
ME. I'LL FIGHT YOU
IF I HAVE TO. ON
PRINCIPLE, I'LL
FIGHT YOU.

AND I DON'T
MUCH WANT A
MAGIC SHIRT IN
AMONG MY STOCK,
EITHER. BUT I
WON'T JUST LET
YOU ROB ME.

CITIZEN
WATCHES



EPilogue.

9:45 SWISS TIME.
WHEN SANDS GIVES
THE HAWAIIAN SHIRT
TO BEKKER.

THE RICH MAN CRIES...
BURSTS INTO TEARS THEN
AND THERE. OH, OH, OH,
THE JOY HE FEELS.
SANDS FEELS AWKWARD
AT THE SIGHT OF THIS.
HE TAKES HIS PAYMENT
AND GOES.

BEKKER IS LEFT ALONE.
HIM AND THE SHIRT.

IT'S 9:51 AT THIS POINT.

AND BY 9:54...

...ALBERT BEKKER IS
GONE. NO SIGN. NO
TRACE. FOREVER
GONE.

OUTSIDE THE ALPINE
WINDS BLOW SWEET
AND SOFT AND LOW.

Deadman Wade

"THIS IS WHAT
AWESOME
LOOKS LIKE!"

DCP